

**CITY OF FRIDLEY**  
**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING – APRIL 4, 2016**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairperson Heintz called the April 4, 2016 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present: Mike Heintz, Michele Barrett, Shanna Larson

Others Present: Jack Kirk, Parks and Recreation Director  
Kay Qualley, Environmental Planner

**APPROVAL OF MARCH 7, 2016 PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

MOTION by Ms. Larson, seconded by Ms. Barrett to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2016 meeting.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

**APPROVAL OF PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION AGENDA FOR APRIL 4, 2016**

MOTION by Ms. Barrett, seconded by Ms. Larson, to approve the agenda for the April 4, 2016 meeting as submitted by staff.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

**1. STAFF REPORT**

**a. Program Update**

Mr. Kirk stated that the Program Update is included in the meeting information to give the Commission members a report on the programming over the past month. One of the exhibits for the new Springbrook Interpretive building will be a tornado exhibit. It will feature short videos from people who witnessed the tornado or dealt with the damage to the Springbrook Park. Videotaping of these individuals took place last week.

Mr. Kirk stated that Recreation Program Supervisor Cleveland McCoy has developed a partnership with Century College for volunteer workers to help out at the ZONE. The College has a service requirement and this arrangement helps students meet that requirement of the school curriculum.

Mr. Kirk stated that Connie Thompson is working with the Police Department on a series of programs to teach the seniors what our local police department is all about. Upcoming programs include the topics of 911 calls and also dealing with pawn shops.

Mr. Kirk stated that the Honor Our Vets program was a huge success again this year with about 130 veterans and family members attending to find out about veteran benefit programs. Representatives from Senator Klobuchar's and Senator Franken's offices were in attendance at this event.

**b. Park Maintenance Report**

Mr. Kirk stated that the meeting packet included a report from Operations Manager for Streets and Parks Jeff Jensen about activity of the Park Maintenance division during the past month. The Parks Division has had a nice jump on the spring work due to the very warm spring weather. They have been able to get the tennis and sand volleyball court nets out, as well as get the summer athletic fields prepared for use.

The Parks maintenance staff also helped with the sediment removal project from the pond area at Springbrook Nature Center and has been getting prices on replacing the old bridge that was removed.

**c. Springbrook Nature Center Report**

Mr. Kirk stated that the Springbrook Nature Center staff is making preparations for the summer day camps. We are planning to use the new interpretive building for our summer camps and the construction is on schedule, so we should be able to accomplish this. Three new staff members have been hired to run the 11 weeks of summer day camps.

Mr. Kirk stated that Parsons Electric, a local company, is going to donate \$25,000 towards a new audio visual system in the Springbrook Interpretive building. Work has now begun on the installation of that system.

Mr. Kirk stated that work on the new exhibits for Springbrook continues to progress. We are working with Split Rock Studios on the new exhibits and they should be ready to install near the end of May.

**2. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Election of Officers**

Mr. Kirk stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission elects a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the Commission each April. The Chairperson presides over the meetings of the Parks and Recreation Commission and serves as a member of the City's Planning Commission. The Vice-Chairperson acts as Chairperson when the Chair is absent.

Ms. Larson nominated Mike Heintz for Chairperson. There were no other nominations for Chairperson.

Mr. Heintz asked for a vote of all members present and all voted yes to support Mike Heintz for Chairperson.

Ms. Barrett nominated Greg Ackerman for Vice-Chairperson. There were no other nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

Mr. Heintz asked for a vote of all member present and all voted yes to support Greg Ackerman for Vice-Chairperson.

**b. Fall Athletic League Fees**

Mr. Kirk stated that staff is recommending the Fall Athletic League Fees remain the same as they were in 2015. They were raised last year. The recommended fees are \$385 for the Fall Men's Softball, \$400 for the Fall Co-Rec Softball and \$80 for the 4 Person Football.

Motion by Ms. Larson, seconded by Ms. Barrett, to the Fall Adult Athletic League Fees as recommended by staff.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED.

**c. Fridley's Urban Forest Updates – Kay Qualley**

Mr. Kirk stated that Kay Qualley is the Environmental Planner for the City of Fridley and she requested the opportunity to speak to the Parks and Recreation Commission about Fridley's urban forest and some projects that will impact our community.

Ms. Qualley stated that there are some areas from the GreenStep Cities program that interface with parks and park maintenance. She looks for grants that benefit the GreenStep Cities agenda. The City is following the GreenStep Cities best management practices for cities and one of those is to add trees. This will also help us become a Tree City USA. Another best management practice we want to follow is to increase resiliency and be able to better deal with unexpected situations and emergencies. Trees fall into the category of storm water absorption when it comes to dealing with flooding.

Ms. Qualley stated that a trend they are noticing is that the federal government is starting to put out grants for clean air initiatives. Planting trees is an important component in improving air quality.

Ms. Qualley stated that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Minnesota DNR are other agencies as potential grant fund sources. Mitigating emerald ash borer impact and providing cleaner air and water are new priorities.

Ms. Qualley stated that our Green Corp Intern has been working on a tree inventory of City parks and school district property. The inventory will include every tree, the identified species and the condition of the tree. This will help with the public property urban forest management. The University of Minnesota classes are helping to develop some inventory techniques that will allow for an expansion of the program to private property in our community.

Ms. Qualley stated that the City does have a breakdown of the deciduous trees on public land and about a third or 31% are Green Ash trees. The next largest percentage is the Silver Maple at 16%, followed by the Norway Maple at 9%, the Siberian Elm at 8% and the Bur Oak at 7%. There are a number of other species between 5% and 2% of our tree make up. We do not have a very balanced distribution of species. The GreenStep Cities has a best management practice that promotes resiliency and that relates to increasing the number of species in our urban forest.

Ms. Qualley stated that one of the most at-risk neighborhoods in our City is the Melody Manor area. There are some neighborhoods in this area that have up to 90% Green Ash trees.

Ms. Qualley stated that as part of becoming a Tree City USA, the City of Fridley is going to have an Arbor Day celebration on Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The Pollution Control Agency will be giving the City \$2,000 to plant 10 trees in Commons Park and promote the event. This will include some new species to the park system. There will also be small, baby trees for sale at the event. The Parks and Recreation Commission members are invited to attend and participate.

Mr. Heintz stated that he would suggest getting information on the Fridley Community Center message sign and the SpineCare Associates message sign on Highway 65 to advertise this event.

Ms. Qualley stated that on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, the City is going to have its third Sustainability Seminar at the Fridley Community Center. Mitch Haustein of the Anoka Conservation District is talking about rain gardens. It will from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. It costs \$10 for admission.

Ms. Qualley stated that she just found out that the City is getting a \$36,000 grant for tree planting from the Minnesota DNR for a two year period. The City has a responsibility for some in-kind help for this grant. Some local companies will be helping with planting trees, including General Mills and Medtronic.

Mr. Heintz asked if it might be possible to partner with Bachman's on the Arbor Day event.

Ms. Qualley stated that is a great idea.

Ms. Larson asked if it was the intention to eradicate the ash trees from the City in the next two years or is it a goal to educate people about the Emerald Ash Borer problem.

Ms. Qualley stated that is something that will need to be worked out by the various City Commissions and the City Council. Each City is handling this in their own way. The City of Minneapolis, for example, is taking down two of every three ash trees on a street. The City of Fridley is working on a draft of an Urban Forestry Plan, to include an Emerald Ash Borer response chapter.

The Commission thanked Ms. Qualley for her presentation.

### **3. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION by Ms. Larson, seconded by Ms. Barrett, to adjourn the April 4, 2016 meeting at 8:10 p.m.

UPON A VOICE VOTE, ALL MEMBERS VOTING AYE, CHAIRPERSON HEINTZ DECLARED THE MOTION CARRIED AND THE APRIL 4, 2016 MEETING ADJOURNED.